

Air Force Prime Time, a weekly news magazine for and about airmen stationed overseas, airs Thursday evenings at 8:25 p.m. Central European Time on AFN television. In this week's edition, a ceremony in Berlin honors Tuskegee fighter pilots fallen in World War II, history of one Tuskegee airman, innovative airman cashes in and more.



Eifel Times

Vol. 35, Issue 10

Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany

March 16, 2001

News briefs

Outstanding airmen banquet

Two 52nd Fighter Wing members were named 3rd Air Force Outstanding NCO and Senior NCO of the Year. Tech. Sgt. Fredrick Soetching, 52nd Operations Support Squadron, and Senior Master Sgt. Brooke McLean, 52nd FW, go on to compete at U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

The major command-level winners will be announced at the USAFE 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year awards banquet taking place at 6 p.m. April 7 in the Ramstein Air Base officers club. Meal tickets cost \$22 for club members; \$25 for non-members. Menu choices include Cajun chicken or filet mignon.

Transportation to and from the banquet departs at 4 p.m. from Spangdahlem Air Base building 23. Estimated return time is 11 p.m.

Call Master Sgt. Vernon Pickard or Staff Sgt. Lisa Yarber at 452-6378 or 452-6379 by Thursday for tickets, to sign up for transportation or for event details.

Petroleum institute award

The 52nd Supply Squadron Fuels Management Flight has been selected as one of three finalists for the 2000 American Petroleum Institute Award. The award recognizes the best fuels management flight in the Air Force.

The other two finalists are the 436th Airlift Wing (Air Mobility Command), Dover Air Force Base, Del., and the 366th Wing (Air Combat Command), Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

This marks the 34th year the award has been presented.

On-site evaluations of each base will be conducted later this month and completed in April.

AFROTC one-year program

Meetings about the one-year professional officer course early release program take place at 3:30 p.m. today, 8 a.m. Monday, 3:30 p.m.

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Staff Sgt. Eydin Hansen, 23rd Fighter Squadron life support technician, adjusts a pair of night-vision goggles on a pilot's helmet. Hansen attends Commissioned Officer Training as a second lieutenant in April. Airman 1st Class Michelle Roquid

Wing members take 'direct' route to AF biomedical commissioning

By Capt. Glen Roberts
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Good things come to those who wait, as the saying goes, but better things come to those who work for them. And in this case, the work looked easy. Almost too easy.

"You go to bed as a staff sergeant, and you wake up as a commissioned officer," said Staff Sgt. Eydin Hansen, a life support technician in the 23rd Fighter Squadron. "But it's anything but easy."

Hansen, an Oakhurst, Calif., native, was one of two Spangdahlem Air Base airmen to be selected this month for a direct commission into the Air Force's Biomedical Services Corps. In April, he'll leave for Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

for four weeks at Commissioned Officer Training. The night before he departs his home for Maxwell AFB, he'll go to sleep as a staff sergeant – but when he wakes, he'll be the Air Force's newest second lieutenant and aerospace physiologist. No OTS. No military training instructors. No hospital corners on his bed.

As good as that sounds, Hansen bristles at the suggestion a direct commission, as opposed to more traditional paths like ROTC, Officer Training School or the Air Force Academy, is an easier road toward officership.

"Some of my friends have said jokingly I've taken the easy road. But really it's no easier, just different," the 28-year-old father of one said. "In the past

year or so, I've physically attended 16 classes, most of them on weekends, nights and holidays. That's on top of the 56 units I started with, and doesn't include the classes I CLEPPed." (College level entrance exams allow a student to get credit for a course if they can pass a final exam.)

Senior Airman Gabriel Gonzalez, a surgical services journeyman in the 52nd Medical Operations Squadron, was also selected for the program last month.

Gonzalez, a 27 year old McAllen, Texas, native, feels that although direct commission candidates aren't subjected to the harsh greeting of other officer training

See Commission, Page 2

Top-Up provides members 100 percent tuition assistance

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — A new program provides active-duty Air Force people with essentially 100 percent tuition assistance by allowing them to combine the current 75 percent TA benefit with their Montgomery GI Bill, said Air Force education officials.

The program called Top-Up is available to all active-duty airmen eligible for both Montgomery GI Bill benefits and tuition assistance, said Jim Sweizer, Air Force voluntary education branch chief.

This eligibility also extends to those people who converted to the MGIB from the Veterans Educational Assistance Program and have paid their \$2,700 contribution, Sweizer said.

"Top-Up benefits, retroactive for courses starting on or after Oct. 30, 2000, provide students with up to 36 months of payments which do not impact the 36 months of (MGIB) benefits," Sweizer said. "If a student claims 24 months of Top-Up while on active duty and, after separating from the service, enters school, they are still eligible for the full 36 months of MGIB benefits."

However, students should remember Top-Up payments are borrowed against future GI Bill benefits, education officials said.

Future monthly GI Bill benefits are reduced by the amount of Top-Up dollars claimed, divided by 36 (the total number of months of MGIB benefits). Therefore, a student who received a total of \$360 in Top-Up payments would receive \$640 per

month instead of the current maximum MGIB benefit of \$650.

"Top-Up benefits are dependent on course length and generally not cost, although total Top-Up benefits in any given term cannot exceed the MGIB full-time rate of \$650 per month," Sweizer said. "One student may enroll in an eight-week course and receive \$150 in Top-Up while another may enroll in a different eight-week course and receive \$300. At the end of each term, each student will still have 34 months of remaining Top-Up benefits. However, the student who received more Top-Up money will also receive a lesser amount in future regular MGIB payments."

For more information about the Top-up program, call the base education office at 452-6063.

Accidents

By Tech. Sgt. Franklin McElhaney
52nd Security Forces Squadron
Reports and Analysis

Winter conditions continue to plague Eifel motorists, accounting for 22 accidents last week. Four of the five major accidents occurred March 6.

The road conditions that day were "amber," which advises drivers to use caution. Ice covered B-50 from Dudeldorf to Metterich. Just past the last Metterich turnoff where the road curves left, a Ford Explorer slid on the ice and left the roadway. The driver was able to avoid the solitary large tree on the curve, but was unable to prevent the vehicle from rolling. Minor injuries and a disabled vehicle were the result.

Later the same day, an American was traveling on L-46 near Spangdahlem when the driver took an s-curve and lost control of his vehicle. The vehicle slid off the road and rolled once. There were no injuries, but the vehicle cab was crushed.

The next two accidents that day happened on L-39 near Speicher. The first involved a black Chevy Blazer traveling between Speicher and Herforst. The driver hit an ice

patch, slid off the road, went into a ditch and rolled once before landing on its wheels. The vehicle was a total loss.

Shortly afterward, an American driving a white BMW on L-39 near Speicher slid off the road, went down a 10-foot embankment and into a field. This caused the vehicle's frame to bend and damaged the front axle.

Fortunately, there were no injuries in either accident.

Of the 17 minor accidents that resulted in \$11,800 in damage, the majority occurred while drivers were backing up. Drivers need to ensure there is adequate room when backing up. This is especially true when road are icy, as other drivers may not be able to stop in time. Four of the minor accidents occurred on B-50, two on L-46, four on L-39 and seven in various on-base locations.

There were a total of 23 traffic citations issued last week by the 52nd Security Forces Squadron; eight of which were issued on B-50 for speeding. There were also four traffic complaints against drivers for passing on B-50. Wing policy states people may not pass any vehicle traveling on B-50 faster than 40 kilometers.



Airman 1st Class Michelle Roquid

The "write" stuff

Clarissa Cady, age 13, registers for the Spangdahlem Air Base Library "Read a Book" contest taking place through March. The book report entries win prizes. Call the library at 452-7056 for details.

Commission

Continued from Page 1

programs most are no strangers to rigorous, stressful situations.

"Most direct commissionees are professionals," he said. "A lot of them are doctors, lawyers or dentists. They've paid their dues throughout their professional lives, like med school or law school. That's why some get commissioned as first lieutenant or captains."

The direct commissioning program is also a little more competitive, he said.

"We're different from OTS in that we're competing not only to get a commission, but to get the job of aerospace physiologist," he said. "We compete with civilians, OTS, ROTC and Academy grads just to get into the BSC Corps. And there's fewer slots than OTS as well."

Hansen, a seven-year Air Force member who arrived at Spangdahlem AB in March 1998, first found out about the program when his job as a life support technician brought him in contact with Maj. Brenda Crook, an aerospace physiologist assigned to the 52 Medical Group.

"As a life support technician, our jobs interacted quite a bit," Hansen said. "Both jobs help ensure aircrew members are fully qualified and mission ready for aviation service. Our jobs overlapped in some areas like refresher training, environmental stresses and night-vision goggle check-out. One day, I just said 'Hey Ma'am, how'd you become an aerospace physiologist?' I don't know if she knows it, but she recruited me at that moment. From that point on, it became my goal to be an aerospace physiologist."

Direct commissions are usually restricted to certain professional areas, such as the Biomedical Services Corps, the Medical/Dental Services Corps, chaplains and staff judge advocates, most of which require advanced degrees. Line of the Air Force positions, such as pilots, logisticians and support officers, usually go through ROTC, OTS, or the Academy.

For anyone interested in taking the same road, there are a few things to know. First, the applicant must have at least a bachelor's degree.

"Usually in the Biomedical Sciences Corps, you need a degree in biology, physiology, kinesiology, some type of -

'ology,'" Hansen said. "But you can also be accepted with an alternate degree."

Applicants should know the application process itself is rigorous, Gonzalez said.

"When I heard about this program, I basically threw myself into the application process for four solid months," Gonzalez said.

Hansen notes applicants also need a plan, and must be able to communicate that plan and gain the support of their supervisors.

"Research what you want to do, look at the requirements for the AFSC, and tailor your classes toward those requirements," Hansen said. "Know the deadlines for the packages, ensure your college transcripts are sent on time, have your physical completed, and follow through each step of the way. Everything should be focused on the end result."

Hansen did offer one last piece of advice for preparing the application package.

"Be prepared to spend a lot of money on Fed Ex and priority mail," he said. "You'll be doing a lot of it!"

Briefs

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Wednesday and 3:30 p.m. March 23.

The program offers active-duty airmen the opportunity for an early release to enter the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps. It's open to airmen who can complete their bachelor's degree and AFROTC within one year. All students must receive a commission by fiscal 2002.

Application submission deadline is August. Members wanting to attend field training in the summer should submit their application by May 1. Members submitting applications after May 1 enroll in AFROTC in the fall and attend field training in summer 2002.

To qualify, applicants must be 27 or

younger by June 30 of their potential commissioning date. Non-scholarship applicants must be under 30 by the application date or have obtained an age waiver.

Visit <http://web1.maxwell.af.mil/afloats> (no hyphen) /enlisted/oneyear.htm or call the education office at 452-6063 for details.

Bulk trash pick up

Trash pick up for Spangdahlem Air Base and Bitburg Annex military housing areas and Herforst and Speicher government-leased housing areas has permanently changed to the first Thursday of each month.

Residents should put out bulk trash items the first Wednesday of each month for pick up, unless specified otherwise. Call Tech.

Sgt. Andy Harper at 452-5124 for more information.

Official photographs

Order official photographs through the base multi-media center by collecting unit requirements and submitting a consolidated list via e-mail to 52CS/Multimedia on the base global e-mail listing or by calling 452-6555. Include the number of copies per position per size requested and a point of contact. Submission deadline is May 15.

TRICARE briefing

A TRICARE briefing for military retirees takes place at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Spangdahlem Air Base Saber Club. Call

retired Chief Master Sgt. Bobby Roberts at 453-7202 for details.

Supply inventory

The 52nd Supply Squadron Individual Equipment Element closes Monday through March 23 for inventory. People requiring services within these dates should call Tech. Sgt. Raul Wilshire at 452-6866.

Ambulance response

To call an ambulance for medical emergencies, Spangdahlem Air Base residents should call 116. Bitburg Annex and off-base residents should call a German ambulance at 19-222.



Kelley Syarto and her daughter, Sara, eat cake and watch TV in one of many rooms in the 52nd Munitions Support Squadron's new family support center at Kleine Brogel Air Base, Belgium.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Rich Romero

FYI

The 52nd Munitions Support Squadron is a geographically separated unit responsible for U.S. war reserve munitions in support of the Belgian air force 10th Wing (F-16) Tactical in direct support of NATO and its strike mission.

It is responsible for ownership, custody, accountability, maintenance and release of a \$500 million weapons stockpile.

The 52nd Logistics Group at Spangdahlem Air Base is the parent organization. Currently, there are 135 people assigned to the unit and about 250 family members.

It's located about 200 kilometers from Spangdahlem AB just outside the town of Kleine Brogel.

Believe it: Command aims its 'FOCUS' at GSU by funding long-awaited family center

By Tech. Sgt. Rich Romero
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

KLEINE BROGEL AIR BASE, Belgium - For Michelle Sprague, seeing is believing. After the opening of a new family support center at the 52nd Munitions Support Squadron, she's now a believer.

Nearly a year in the making at a cost of about \$500,000, Gen. Gregory Martin, United States Air Forces in Europe commander, past and present unit commanders and a host of distinguished guests ceremoniously opened the facility March 9.

Sprague and her husband, Staff Sgt. Anthony Sprague, have a 3 1/2-year-old son and have been at the Belgian base nearly three years.

"Too many times things are said and nothing ever gets done," she said. "I said I'd believe it when I saw it (a new FSC). I was shocked. It's beautiful; truly amazing."

Compared to the window-bar adorned, decrepit, jail-like trailer used previously, the new facility looks like a mansion.

"In the old facility, if you got more than two people in it, there wasn't enough room to swing a cat," said Lt. Col. John Mabes Jr., 52nd MUNSS commander.

Martin agreed the facility was long overdue for the Air Force members and their families in the 52nd MUNSS.

"We get the highest payoff with a facility such as this where we meet the needs of both the military members, by providing classroom space for off-duty education, while at the same time taking care of their families," he said.

The payoff for people at the small GSU amounts to "everything," according to Donna Jarvis, FSC director. "We had no place for meetings of any type. This whole next week is already filled with programs every day. We plan to offer mom and kid events. There's now a teen center. We want to hold craft classes. We just couldn't do any of this before.

"I'm excited. It's almost like a wedding."

Equally important to the people is they now have a sense of importance; that people do care, said former 52nd MUNSS Commander Lt. Col. Scott MacDonald, currently assigned to Air Force Space Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

"Being at a GSU in a foreign country is a huge challenge for people," he said. "They need support; that's particularly important here. When you come to a place like this and search for help only to find an old trailer, you wonder just how important you are to these people. It sets the tone.



The new family support center.

"When you come to a place like this and search for help only to find an old trailer, you wonder just how important you are to these people."

Lt. Col. Scott MacDonald
former 52nd MUNSS
commander



The old family support center.

"This (new facility) helps people feel as though they're important. They feel like someone actually cares about them."

MacDonald holds a special fondness for the people at the 52nd MUNSS, so much so that he took leave to attend the ceremony as well as visit in-laws in Germany. He and former USAFE Commander Gen. John Jumper, now the Air Combat Command commander, set the ball in motion that led to last week's opening.

Jumper visited the unit on Thanksgiving 1999. MacDonald and his staff posed the idea of a \$100,000 facility. Jumper saw the old trailer and said, "we weren't thinking big enough," MacDonald said. "He told his staffers to find a way to help us out."

That help came in the form of Funding Opportunities for Communities in USAFE, or FOCUS money. Funds for the program come from a central account held for the USAFE commander, said Col. Neva Lynde, comptroller for the headquarters USAFE Financial Management and Comptroller directorate. FOCUS funds are typically aimed at services such as youth programs, child development and community centers. Projects that make life better for people in the command.

"This is a prime example of why USAFE gives FOCUS money - to provide our bases and GSUs with hard-to-fund, quality-of-life programs and facilities," Martin said.

Like a child with a new toy, officials at the unit are still ironing out details of programs to offer in the new facility. Classes took place in the new facility this week for military and families members enrolled in University of Maryland and City Colleges of Chicago.

"We didn't have a lending closet because there was no space," Mabes said. "We're now able to display local area information for newcomers. We always had that information, but because of space it was never seen. We're looking at ways of running a day care coop, or a non-appropriated fund child care."

Sprague is anxious to finally see programs for children. "I plan to put it to good use. We're allowed to hold birthday parties here, which is great. I'd like to see us do Easter projects with the kids - decorate eggs, hold an Easter egg hunt."

She also believes the facility will boost the low morale of many spouses at KB. "Morale is low because we don't have much to do. This will certainly help improve that."

It may be hard for some people to understand how one facility can do all that, but when there's no base exchange or commissary, only a small shoppette, "any touch of home typically found at a big base improves the morale for everyone," Mabes said.

It even makes believers out of people.

Livestock epidemic closes animal attractions

Foot, mouth disease not human health threat, but precautions necessary to prevent spread

By Capt. Elizabeth Ortiz
U.S. Air Forces in Europe News Service

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine in Europe says foot and mouth disease is an animal disease and not a threat to human health. The findings were published in an Army, Air Force and Navy-coordinated fact sheet published Feb. 28.

Foot and mouth disease is the most feared livestock disease in the world according to the fact sheet, because of its grave impact on a country's agricultural business and world trade.

Cases of FMD continue to rise in England and their has been one confirmed case in France.

FMD is a highly infectious viral disease of cloven-footed animals. The disease is characterized by blistering lesions mostly on the feet, tongue, mouth and teats of infected animals. Most animals survive the disease but never regain the same level of productivity.

The virus is highly contagious among livestock and spreads quickly from one animal to another. It can be transmitted in several ways: on equipment, vehicles or other

objects and articles of clothing, or by pets, wild animals and birds. The wind can carry it up to 30 miles.

It's very difficult to control FMD due to the wide range of animals it affects. A policy of quarantine, slaughter and vaccination is the only known way to control it from spreading.

FMD isn't a threat to public health, but there are rare reports of human infections — typically, laboratory and slaughterhouse workers who came in contact with blister fluid from livestock or large concentrations of the virus. These infected workers experienced minor skin lesions and mild cold symptoms.

"This disease is not a human concern," says Col. (Dr.) Jon Casbon, chief of professional services for U.S. Air Forces in Europe's Office of the Command Surgeon. "The current outbreak does not pose a threat to humans. There is a common childhood infection referred to as 'hand, foot and mouth disease.' This is caused by a different virus and is not related to the animal disease in any way."

To protect livestock, the U.S. European Command's Customs Executive Agency is warning travelers about inadvertently importing FMD via certain products or even on

their shoes. U.S. members traveling to England are advised to stay away from livestock farms and to not take any meat or dairy products with them when they leave England. These include sausages, meat pies, cheese, butter, yogurt and milk, as well as pet products that contain meat or animal by-products such as pig's ears or rawhide. U.S. members stationed in England are likewise advised to leave these products behind when they travel abroad.

The British Ministry of Agriculture has advised people in England to postpone unnecessary trips that might bring them into contact with livestock. British Agriculture Minister Nick Brown has appealed to the public to "minimize the risks of spread."

Major sporting events are being called off to comply with Ministry of Agriculture quarantine requirements. RAF Mildenhall has curtailed some outdoor training. At RAF Croughton, disinfectant procedures are in place for members working in nearby farmlands.

For more information on FMD, people should call the public health office or log on to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/~nohyphen/oa/pubs/fsfmd.html.

Base coffee house offers free java, relaxed atmosphere

By Senior Airman Jennifer Lindsey
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Unaccompanied airmen looking for a place to hang out with friends or meet new people of all ranks in a relaxed atmosphere may want to check out the Coffee House.

Open at 7 p.m. each Friday, the smell of cappuccino claims the halls of its new location on the third floor of Spangdahlem Air Base building 128.

The Coffee House is the brain-child of wing Chaplain (Maj.) Karl Wiersum, who wanted to reach out to more than just the unaccompanied airmen who already attended chapel functions. With the help of Vern Salter and Bill Mason in 1999, the Coffee House developed into the meeting place it is today.

"There's no alcohol, so it's a good stopping place to meet other people interested in getting out and doing other things than just hitting the clubs and drinking," said Staff Sgt. Tim Bolin, 52nd Fighter Wing Manpower and Quality Office. "I remember when I lived in the dorms, on the weekends it was just one



Wing members belly-up to the bar at the chapel-sponsored Coffee House in Spangdahlem Air Base building 128.

drinking party after another. The coffee house offers something different than that."

The Coffee House is known for having the best coffee stock on base, according to Salter. "We have about seven flavors of coffee, espresso and 10-15 flavored syrups found in

the United States at Starbucks and other coffee shops. We have everything you find at Starbucks, but for a lot less — it's all free, provided by chaplain's funds."

Although the wing chaplain office sponsors the program, the Coffee House

offers a non-religious, strictly social atmosphere.

"People shouldn't worry that they're going to show up and find out it's a Friday night bible-study group, although they may find a few people who attend the same church service on base," Bolin said.

However, to keep the atmosphere open and friendly for everyone, certain music or other possibly offensive entertainment isn't permitted, Salter explained.

"Some of the people there have formed informal groups of friends who meet there regularly," Bolin said. "People there usually listen to music, talk, watch a movie together, play board games or cards."

"It's also a great place to go and meet other people. Groups that form up there, make plans and go out on trips together."

By offering a place to go, people to meet and free entertainment, the Coffee House gives unaccompanied airmen an alternative to hitting the clubs and figuring out who's going to be the designated driver.

MilMod replaces Air Force's current personnel system

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — In less than two months, military personnel specialists throughout the Air Force, Air National Guard and Reserve will begin using state-of-the-art technology to process "total force" personnel information.

The Air Force Military Personnel Data System Modernization program, or MilMod, will be turned on May 1, replacing the 1970s technology currently being used with a relational database using the Oracle Human Resources software. It has been more than 20 years since the last major update.

"We've been working hard for nearly five years building this modernized system to take Air Force personnel processing into the next century," said Lt. Col. Ed Oliver, MilMod program manager at the Air Force Personnel Center. "Our folks have been working seriously long hours to get this

new system up and running by the May 1 deadline. We're now in the final stretch and are building the world's largest, and we think the best, human resource system."

The new system will support all "life cycle" personnel management functions from recruiting through job assignment and ultimately separation or retirement. It will provide real-time updating and reporting capabilities not available in today's Personnel Data System, Oliver said.

"Current automation technology is being leveraged to improve support at all levels and is the foundation for building a robust integrated personnel system for the total force," he said.

The new system has several inherent improvements from the current system. The most apparent improvement is the graphical-user interface, which will give personnel technicians online, real-time access to personnel information.

"We've also standardized the support we're providing to the total force," Oliver said. "This will improve system support to the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve personnel processes."

But, as with any new system, there will be a transition period where the normal personnel functions people use will be unavailable, officials said. There will be a nine-day period prior to the implementation date where no personnel transactions will be accepted into the systems being replaced. All active-duty, Guard and Reserve members are urged to complete any personnel actions before April 21 to ensure the transactions are processed prior to the transition, or people can wait until MilMod comes online May 1.

For more information, visit the MilMod home page at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/modern/default_ie.htm. (Courtesy of Air Force Personnel Center News Service)



Community Mailbox

AFSA meeting

Air Force Sergeant's Association chapter 1681 meets 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Spangdahlem Air Base Community Activities Center. A free lunch is provided. Call Master Sgt. Renzy Davenport at 452-6324 for details.

Dance team

Dance auditions for a beverage company takes place at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Spangdahlem Air Base Community Activities Center. Call LePercia Clarke at 0160-6256443 for details.

Spaghetti dinner

A free home-cooked spaghetti dinner for unaccompanied airmen takes place 5-6:30 p.m. Thursday in the Spangdahlem Air Base Chapel. Call 452-6711 for details.

Spouses meeting

The first meeting of the 52nd Equipment Maintenance Squadron Spouses Organization takes place at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in Bitburg Annex building 2001. All 52nd EMS spouses and members are invited. Call Andye Hall at 06561-18629.

Sub sandwiches

Claudie's Cones and Café has added submarine sandwiches to its menu. Call 452-6090 for details.

Day camp

Spangdahlem Air Base and Bitburg Annex youth centers accept spring break day camp registration applications. Throughout spring break, the youth centers open 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays for children 5-12. The Spangdahlem Air Base pre-teen center opens noon to 6 p.m. weekdays. The Bitburg



Senior Airman Jennifer Lindsey

Hitting the books

Fifth-grade Bitburg Middle School students Destiny Jones, left, Melanie Crawford, center, and Brenna Jones do their math homework in the LEAPS program. Created by fifth-grade teacher Christina Crane, Learning Everything About Personnel Success offers students extra help in school subjects 3-4 p.m. each Monday and Thursday in Room 110.

Annex pre-teen center opens noon to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday and noon to 10 p.m. Friday. Call the Spangdahlem AB youth center at 452-7545, the Bitburg Annex location at 453-7206, the Spangdahlem AB teen center at 452-7852 or the Bitburg Annex location at 453-6163 for details.

School news

■The Eifel School Board meets 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Bitburg Middle School gymnasium. Agenda items include the potential loss of assistant principals at several schools and consolidation of elementary and middle schools. People wanting to address the school board should contact Capt. William Rogers today at william.rogers@spangdahlem.af.mil.

■The Bulldog County Fair takes place from 5:30-8:30 p.m. March 23 in the Spangdahlem Middle School. The event features a Polynesian and country dancing teams, a "crazy" fashion show, games and a silent auction. Tickets are sold in advance at

the school and at the door. Used book, agricultural and patriotic decorations, and baked goods donations are needed. Call Jody Turner at 06575-959127 for details.

■Performances of "Chariots of the Sun," by New York actor Jeffrey Benoit, takes place at 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. and at 1:15 p.m. Thursday in the Spangdahlem Elementary School cafeteria. Call 452-6881 for details.

■The Bitburg Elementary School Parent, Teacher Association meeting takes place at 6 p.m. April 3 in the school. Call 453-7215 for details.

■Bitburg elementary seeks volunteers to help with its spring carnival. Call Pamela Troester at 06561-604759 for details.

Mainz trip

An all ranks, unaccompanied airmen trip to Mainz, Germany, takes place April 7. Members must be single or unaccompanied and working in a shop supporting members deployed or TDY in excess of 30 continuous

days. Departure time is 7 a.m. and estimated return time is 9 p.m. Trip includes transportation only. Call the family support center at 452-6422 for details.

Spring bazaar

The Spangdahlem Spouses and Enlisted Members Club Spring Bazaar takes place noon to 8 p.m. today, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday in Hangars 1 and 2 on Spangdahlem Air Base. The bazaar is open to all U.S. and NATO ID card holders, but strollers and pets aren't allowed in the hangars. Call Lorrie Hoskins at 06565-942431 for event details.

Scholarships

The Air Force Sergeant's Association Division 16 deadline for Term IV college scholarship applications is Tuesday. Download applications from the AFSA Web site at www.afsahq.org and send completed forms to kevin.jones@ramstein.af.mil.

School arts festival

The fourth annual Celebrating the Arts festival, featuring art and music from Eifel military community schools, begins with a concert at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the Spangdahlem Air Base fitness center. Admission is free.

Cub Scouts

The Cub Scouts local chapter seeks volunteers to help with summer day camp July 9-14. The camp is designed to encourage and teach boys to use leadership skills. Call Gary Hackl at 06553-1745 or John Kennedy at 06561-948843 for details or to sign up.

Girl scouts

Local Girl Scout chapters seek volunteers for lone troop committee chair, treasurer, registrar and events committee chair positions. Call Lisa Denoncour at 06565-944587 for details.

Movies

All movies play at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Bitburg Castle

Tonight

Valentine (R)

Four friends receive morbid Valentine's Day cards from someone who's stalking them. Someone they spurned when they were younger and is seeking a day of revenge on Valentine's Day 2001.

Saturday

Valentine

Sunday

Family Man (PG-13)

Through a variety of circumstances, Jack finds himself waking up next to his girlfriend whom he hasn't seen in 13 years. There's a baby crying in the next room and a 6-year-old girl calling him daddy. And that's just the beginning in a long list of surprises for Jack.

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Wednesday

Dude, Where's My Car? (PG-13)

Last night, two party-hearty dudes had an unbelievable time. Too bad they can't remember a thing, including where they parked their car. So they retrace their steps to find out what they did last night.

Thursday

Bounce (PG-13)

Buddy is delayed at the airport waiting for his flight. While there, he meets fellow passenger, Greg, who opts to be bumped. When the flight resumes, Buddy thinks he's doing a good deed by swapping tickets with Greg. Sadly, the flight crashes, so Buddy decides to check on Greg's widow, but he doesn't plan on falling in love with her.

Spangdahlem Skyline

Tonight

Hannibal (R)

After having successfully eluded the authorities for years, he's soon discovered and flees to his homeland of America to once again make contact with disgraced Agent Clarice.

Saturday

Emperor's New Groove (G, 4 p.m.)

Animated Emperor Kuzco is transformed into a llama by his power-hungry adviser, the devious diva Yzma. Stranded in the jungle, Kuzco's only chance to reclaim the high life rests with peasant Pacha. Kuzco's perfect world becomes a perfect mess as this most unlikely duo deal with hair-raising dangers.

Hannibal (7 p.m.)

Sunday

Hannibal

Monday

Miss Congeniality (PG-13)

FBI agent, Gracie, poses as Miss New Jersey in the "Miss Liberty" pageant while trying to prevent a terrorist group from bombing the event.

Tuesday

Miss Congeniality

Closed Wednesday and Thursday

Times and movies are subject to change.
For the most current information,
call 453-7541.

Craftsmen, classic vehicles highlight annual Beda market

By Iris Reiff

52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Weekend shoppers can get a taste of something different today through Sunday at the 20th annual Bitburg-Beda Market.

The name, Beda, is the old Celtic name of today's Bitburg. The Beda market is a community-wide event, in which townspeople present it's economic and cultural way of life.

Located in front of the Beda Haus cultural center, located in the heart of the community, people can see a variety of classic cars and agricultural vehicle displays. Visitors can also see the handicrafts of more than 50 artisans and enjoy the food and drink available at vending booths.

Ancient artifacts will also be on display in tents and inside bank lobbies, located around the Beda Haus.

The market officially opens at 10:45 a.m. Friday; however, most activities kick off at 10 a.m. Saturday.

Additionally, German folk music will be performed 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and 1-4:30 p.m. Sunday on the Beda Platz.

During the event, Bitburg stores open 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and 1-6 p.m. Sunday.

Because parking in town will be limited, a free shuttle service to and from the event meets at the Bitburg Flugplatz. It runs 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Sunday.



Alexander Thiesen

A craftsman weaves a basket to sell at last year's Beda market.

Musical features fanciful horses

By Iris Reiff

52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Escape into a fantasy world this weekend by seeing the musical, "The Magic Forest" and "Goa," in Trier.

The modern show features high-tech special effects, 70 horses, 55 actors, artists and magicians.

Three horse enthusiasts who wanted to create a unique musical featuring the beauty of show horses wrote the story. The result was "The Magic Forest," which debuted in 1996 in Koln and toured throughout Germany and the Netherlands for three years.

The "The Magic Forest" was such a success the writers were inspired to create a second show "Goa."

"Goa" is about the adventures of a fairy named Angie and her friends as they battle evil in the world.

The first performance takes place at 8 p.m. today, at 4 and 8 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 and 6 p.m. Sunday at the Messegelaende fairgrounds, located below the third Mosel bridge.

Military members and their family members, students, seniors and ADAC members with valid ID cards qualify for discount ticket prices and prizes.

Reserve tickets by calling 0180-5311515. Tickets have been selling quickly. If a German recording comes on, remain on the line. English is spoken. Callers may have to redial the number several times until an agent becomes available.



Courtesy photo

Fairy Angie and a unicorn in the musical, "Goa."



Out and about



■ Listen to renowned operas and operettas at 8 p.m. March 30 at the Beda House cultural center. Entry is \$14 for adults and \$8 for students. For details and tickets, call the Bitburg Cultural Society at 06561-6001-144 or 145.

■ Volksmarch in the Black Forest and Rhein region March 24. Cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for children. Another volksmarching trip takes place in Berlin April 20-22. Cost is \$65 for adults and \$55 for children. Eifel Wanderers meet at 7 p.m. April 4 in the Zum Stein Gasthaus in Metterich. Call 06569-963184 or 06575-959425 for details.

■ Thomas Loeffel and Norland Wind perform Irish music at 8:30 p.m. today in the Trier Tuchfabrik cultural center, located on Weberbach, Wechselstrasse. For details or tickets, call 0651-145990.

■ Listen to Irish folk music by the Rambling Rovers and Celtic Express at 8 p.m. Saturday in the Bitburg Haus der Jugend. Typical Irish food and beverages will be available for purchase.

■ Reserve tickets for the German Bundeswehr military corps concert April 28 in the Hettenrodt Zirkuszelt. For details, call 0651-145990.

■ Visit the Landscheid spring market

March 31 through April 1 featuring indoor and outdoor markets at the Eifelland hall. The market opens at 11 a.m. March 31. Entertainment, food and beverages will also be available.

■ The German air force Single Intelligence and Analysis Center 70, located in the General-von-Seidel Caserne in Trier, sponsors an open house 1-5 p.m. March 30. The event features a weapons systems static display including the Leopard helicopter, Weasel and Marder tanks and other military equipment. A multi-media show, demonstrations and entertainment also take place. Call 0651-91624 for details.

■ Visit a flea market Sunday inside and outside the Bitburg Flugplatz hall; in front of the Wittlich Moebel Kings furniture store, located on Rudolf-Dieselstrasse; along the Zeltingen-Rachtig Mosel shore; in front of the Konz Rathaus or city hall; inside and outside the Pruem hall and inside and outside the Koblenz Messe hall, located on Wallersheim Kreisel; inside and outside the Machern Cloister; in front of the Schweich Edeka store, and inside and outside the Trier Messepark hall.

■ "Magic Of The Dance" tap show

takes place April 4 at the Bitburg Edith-Stein school. For tickets, call 0651-145990.

■ Now is a good time for volksmarching in Germany. Most volksmarches follow a round-trip route. Pick up a volksmarching schedule at the fitness center or visit the Eifel Wanderers Web page at www.welcome-no-hyphen.to/eifelwanderers for more information.

■ Jazz and swing music of the Glenn Miller Orchestra plays March 23 in the Trier Europa Halle. For tickets, call the Trierischer Volksfreund Press Center at 0651-145990.

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Information, Tickets and Tours offers the following tours in March and April. Call the Spangdahlem Air Base Community Activities Center at 452-6567 or the Bitburg Annex community center at 453-7120 for details.

■ Prague shopping express, March 23-24. Cost is \$75 for a single seat, \$95 for a double seat for one person.

■ Cochem medieval dinner, March 24. Cost is \$65 per person.

■ Bavarian castles express, March 31. Cost is \$80 for adults, \$75 for children ages 3-17.

■ Castle Drachenfels, Birkenstock store and dinner at the Outback Steak House, March 31. Cost is \$35 for adults, \$30 for children ages 3-12.

■ Spring break in Spain, April 6-12. Cost is \$279 for adults, \$195 for children 2-10.

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The outdoor recreation program sponsors the following trips in March and April. Winter hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call 452-7176 for details.

■ Saalbach, Austria ski trip, March 24-27. Cost is \$290 with ski rental; \$265 with own equipment. Minimum age is 18, unless accompanied by an adult.

■ Easter glacier skiing, April 13-15. Cost is \$195 or a double or triple room with a private bathroom. Add \$25 for skiing equipment rental. Minimum age is 18.

■ Boatsmen's training, 5:30-8:30 p.m. April 19, 21-22. Cost is \$30 for initial training; \$15 for refresher. Minimum age is 18.

Wing OSS officer dominates ski competition

By Senior Airman Jennifer Lindsey
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Jared Hutchinson set the pace at the 2001 U.S. Forces Ski and Snowboard Championships after taking first place March 6 with a 1:20.17 time in the giant slalom, men's military open.

The 52nd Operations Support Squadron officer again proved his skills on the slopes March 7 by claiming first place on the Hausberg slopes at Garmisch, Germany, by claiming first with 28.32 and 29.25, and a combined time of 57.57 in the same category for the slalom.

Another Spangdahlem officer, Chris Welch of the 23rd Fighter Squadron, placed second in the men's military open slalom at 1:27.80. Sean Gustafson, also of the 23rd FS, took seventh with a time of 1:32.68. Gustafson took fifth place during day two with a combined time of 1:20.54. Welch came in seventh with a combined time of 1:44.21.

While many of Hutchinson's competitors were practicing on the slopes preparing for the big race, he was pounding sand while deployed to Saudi Arabia for the first leg of Air Expeditionary Force-2.

"I got the idea to compete in the race after my return from the desert," he said. "A member of the Swiss military ski team invited me to be a part of his team, but I couldn't

I was just there for fun. I measured up the competition and estimated how hard I would have to push to win.

Jared Hutchinson

meet the deadline to enter."

Hutchinson said he tried to form a Spangdahlem Air Base team, but fell short by one person. Therefore, he, Welch and Gustafson had to compete individually.

Although he may not have been as prepared as some for the competition, Hutchinson wasn't new to ski racing. Growing up in Minnesota, he was an avid racer until he attended the U.S. Air Force Academy. He also competed as a cadet, but hadn't skied competitively since 1996.

"Initially, I just wanted to stay safe," Hutchinson said. "I blew my knee out during a competition when I was 21. I was just there for fun. I measured up the competition and

estimated how hard I would have to push to win."

Welch also raced in high school, about 10 years ago, and has only skied recreationally about six times since.

"I raced on rental skis, which was a big challenge," Welch said.

During the second run of the second race March 6, his boot came out of his binding and he had to hike up a hill to finish one of the races. Another challenge was racing against seasoned skiers, some of which ski for a living.

"Some American ski instructors employed with AFRC claimed after the first day's competition Hutchinson only won out of sheer luck," Welch said. "But rather than get angry, we used the competitor's rude comment to fuel our desire to ski our best."

"We're all really grateful the operations (group) commander gave us the opportunity to represent the base. It was a lot of fun. I only wish more military (people) were involved. There was only one competitor in the military female under 30 category."

Hutchinson's future goal is to get a Spangdahlem Air Base team together for next year's competition.

"It's a great way to meet people from other services and countries," he said.

Spang teen holds tight to wall climbing passion

By Senior Airman Jennifer Lindsey
52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs Office

Lisa Lage is a Spangdahlem Air Base teen who's moving up in the world – the world cup indoor climbing championships.

At 16, the soft-spoken youth recently graduated from youth-level competition to adult professional level. The key she said, is dedication.

Climbing is a sport requiring commitment and training, Lage said. "It doesn't come easily. You have to work for it."

No problem there – this is a challenge she and her parents meet daily. But she wouldn't have it any other way. Lage's parent's strong support is proven in the time dedicated to getting Lisa to and from practices and competitions. Lage practices three days weekly at one of six of the nearest climbing gyms, which is about an 1 1/2-hour drive from Spangdahlem Air Base. On her own, Lage also does about three hours of conditioning daily, including 75-90 push-ups and running.

Most of the traveling costs to and from competitions and practice are out of pocket, said Lisa's mother, Karen Lage. Now that she's a member of the U.S. team, competition fees are covered.

Lage said one of the reasons she enjoys the sport so much is because wall-climbing enthusiasts offer such strong emotional support at competitions. Stress is generally low, Lage said, but there are adult professional climbers who compete to win corporate sponsorship and are quite competitive.

"It's a wonderful sport," said Lisa's mother, Karen. "Falls are rare because of the equipment, so it's pretty safe and the support she gets from other climbers is great."

Lage discovered her passion for climbing while on family vacation in New Jersey four years ago.



Lisa Lage practices climbing at a local wall-climbing gym.

"There was a portable climbing wall on the boardwalk and I tried it and liked it," she said. As soon as she and her family returned home to Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, Lage tried wall climbing again at a gym and hasn't stopped climbing since.

To fuel Lisa's enthusiasm, her parents purchased wall-climbing magazines and attended competitions to help Lisa improve her newly found skill. Lisa's father, Steve, currently assigned to the 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron, even started climbing with Lisa. But soon after starting, he had to go away on a deployment and when he returned only a month later, Lisa had far improved her skills and out-climbed him regularly, Karen said.



Lange scales a wall during the 2000 World Cup wall-climbing competition in Nates, France. She took 25th place in the adult professional division.

Then in 1997, Lage joined a team and proved her ability at junior level competitions, traveling to Texas, Colorado, Mississippi and Alabama. At the time, she was one of only 20 girls competing at the national level.

Lage improves her technique through continuous practice and watching others because there aren't many wall-climbing coaches. To help others improve, she also coaches youth new to the sport. Her goal is to continue competing at world-cup level and in extreme-sport games. She also plans to go to college.

Lisa said she's tried outdoor rock climbing, but prefers indoor climbing because she can locate the holds and grips easier, the movements required are more controlled and she can train throughout the year.

Also, the social atmosphere of indoor climbing is more fun for juniors and less equipment is needed.

"Indoor climbing is youth friendly, she said. "Young people learn the techniques quickly and the strength to weight ratio is

ideal for the sport.

"At first it's hard to find the right balance. Former ballet dancers and gymnasts usually do well in the sport."

Time is another wall the Lage family must overcome daily.

Lisa is home-schooled by her mother using video sessions she receives from the United States. She often does her homework on the way to and from climbing practice. "We spend a lot of time in the car, so I have to take advantage of it," Lisa said.

Coupled with the dedication to continually improve her climbing skills and desire to help other youth excel in the sport, it seem Lage is on the right path to mastering the adult professional level.

To find out more about indoor wall climbing, visit the 52nd Services Squadron Outdoor Recreation Center in building 146, near the Mosel Dining Halle, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday or call 452-7176.